25 April 2014

Original: English

Disarmament Commission
2014 substantive session
New York, 7-25 April 2014
Agenda item 5

Recommendation on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons

Revised paper of the Chair[1]

1. The Disarmament Commission:

- Acknowledges the contribution that practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons can make to the maintenance and enhancement of regional and international peace and security
- Reaffirms the validity of the Guidelines for appropriate types of confidence-building measures and for the implementation of such measures on a global or regional level, adopted by the Commission in 1988

Objectives

2. The ultimate objective of practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons is to contribute to international peace and security at the bilateral, regional, subregional and global levels by enhancing greater transparency and dialogue in the field of conventional weapons on a voluntary basis and reducing or even eliminating the causes of mistrust, fear, misunderstanding and miscalculation with regard to conventional weapons-related activities, as well as promoting mutual confidence and trust, which are important in reducing the likelihood of conflict between States.

3. Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons may also facilitate and complement the process of disarmament and arms control measures, but should not be an alternative to disarmament.

[1] As at 23 April 2014.

14-31110 (E)

Please recycle

Principles

4. In carrying out the practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons, Member States should act in accordance with the following principles:

[to be inserted]

General considerations

5. In addition, in pursuit of the objectives, Member States should take practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons, in accordance with the following observations:

(a) Confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons are agreed upon and initiated on a voluntary, consensual and reciprocal basis, taking into account the principle of equal and undiminished security for all at the lowest possible level of armaments and military forces;

(b) The adoption of confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons should take place in such an equitable and balanced manner as to ensure the right of each State to security and to ensure that no individual State or group of States may obtain advantages over others at any stage;

(c) Confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons should be developed at a pace that all States participating in the process consider appropriate, considering that they are a step-by-step process in which the prevailing regional, subregional and international circumstances and capacity of States should be taken into account, while taking advantage of the complementarity of confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons at different levels;

(d) Confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons may facilitate, not replace, the process of disarmament and arms control agreements, taking into account the needs of all States in protecting their security;

(e) Confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons may promote transparency in the manufacture, trade and international transfer of conventional weapons;

(f) Confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons may contribute to preventing the diversion of conventional weapons into the illicit market or to unauthorized armed groups, criminals and terrorist groups;

(g) Confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons may also contribute to reducing misunderstandings and miscalculations with regard to military activities and intentions of participating States;

(h) Confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons, good governance and the rule of law at all levels, in particular at the international level, may mutually support one another;

(i) Confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons, on the one hand, and full and balanced implementation of agreements on arms control, military forces and disarmament, on the other, are complementary and may,

depending on the specific situation, be pursued simultaneously by the States concerned through mutual consent;

(j) Confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons and reduction in the accumulation of conventional weapons are mutually reinforcing processes. Such confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons can furthermore be promoted by reducing military expenditure and the excessive production of conventional weapons;

(k) Assistance and cooperation, provided on a voluntary basis and upon request, may further facilitate the development and enhance the effectiveness of confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons;

(l) The relevant bodies of the United Nations, relevant regional and subregional organizations, non-governmental organizations and research and educational institutions may contribute to promoting confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons, where requested.

Recommendations

6. A number of practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons have evolved and been implemented in different places. The Commission recommends the following practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons, in accordance with the principles and bearing in mind the considerations outlined above:

(a) Member States are encouraged to consider, as appropriate, the establishment of mechanisms at the bilateral, regional, subregional and international levels for exchanging information on confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons and also drawing on lessons learned from other relevant mechanisms;

(b) Member States are encouraged to make use of existing United Nations mechanisms on transparency on military expenditures and conventional arms transfers to further enhance trust and confidence among States, while encouraging Member States to continue deliberations on outstanding issues relating to the scope and effective operation of these mechanisms;

(c) Member States in a position to do so are encouraged to consider, as appropriate, setting up channels of direct communication to create a climate of confidence, to reduce the risk of misunderstanding and, in particular, to prevent any crisis situation from arising owing to misreading of other Member States' intentions;

(d) Confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons are of a voluntary nature and do not replace international legally binding instruments in the field of conventional weapons. Nevertheless, the implementation of such instruments by the States parties thereto, including reporting provisions where applicable, while being a legal obligation, can contribute to the promotion of transparency and confidence. In this regard, Member States are called upon to fully implement their obligations under the treaties to which they are parties, including their reporting provisions;

(e) Member States are called upon to implement fully and in a balanced manner the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International

Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, given that doing so can also contribute to confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons;

(f) Member States in a position to do so, including major producers and exporters of conventional weapons in particular, are encouraged, on a voluntary basis and upon request, to enhance cooperation and provide adequate assistance, including technical and financial assistance, in the areas contributing to confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons, including reporting, sharing best practices, organizing meetings, capacity-building, training and sponsorship programmes;

(g) Relevant bodies of the United Nations, including the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, relevant regional and subregional organizations, without prejudice to their mandates, non-governmental organizations and research and educational institutions are encouraged to facilitate confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons;

(h) Member States in a position to do so are encouraged, as appropriate, to consider organizing or supporting the organization of seminars and workshops to further promote confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons, including through the wider dissemination of these recommendations and by supporting research into new developments in this field.